

Tips to Prevent Holiday Stress



1. **Acknowledge your feelings** – If a loved one has recently passed on or you cannot be with a loved one, realize that it is normal to feel sadness and grief. Take time to cry or express your feelings. You cannot force yourself to be happy just because it is the holiday season
2. **Reach Out** – Feeling lonely or isolated? Seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.
3. **Be Realistic** - The holidays do not have to be perfect. Families change and grow, as well as traditions and rituals. Choose a few to keep and be open to creating new ones.
4. **Set Aside Differences** – Accept family members and friends as they are. Set aside grievances and be understanding of others.
5. **Stick to a Budget** – Before shopping decide on the amount of money you can afford – do not buy happiness.
6. **Plan Ahead** – set aside certain days for shopping, baking and visiting friends and other activities.
7. **Learn to Say No** – Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed.
8. **Don't Abandon Health Habits** – Overindulgence adds to your stress and guilt. Have a healthy snack before holiday parties, get plenty of sleep and incorporate regular physical activity into each day.
9. **Take a Breather** – Make time for yourself - take a walk, listen to soothing music, get a message or read a book. Just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything.
10. **Seek Help** – Still sad and overwhelmed – please call the **Barnabas Health Employee Assistance Program 1-800-300-0628**. They are available 24/7